

From: Sandra Tullis, Cupertino, CA [mailto:stullis@crchealth.com]
Sent: Tuesday, March 18, 2008 10:27 AM
To: MLPAComments
Cc: yscuba
Subject: support for Marine Reserves

March 18, 2008

MLPAComments@resources.ca.gov

RE: Support for Marine Reserves

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am an assistant scuba instructor and have been diving in the Monterey/Carmel area for 6 years now. During my various scuba trips around the world, other divers I have met expressed envy when they heard that I live just an hour's drive from the world renowned dive sites on the coast surrounding the picturesque Monterey Bay Aquarium and Pebble Beach Golf Course. From the Netherland Antilles to Egypt, the kelp forests and pinnacles in the Monterey/Carmel area are regarded by all I encounter as a "must visit" for any diver. The impression that the rest of the world has is that the dives sites and marine life in Monterey and Carmel are well protected, similar to thriving marine parks in Bonaire or Belize.

Unfortunately, we will not be able to do this without Marine Reserves. If we do not expand and enforce Marine Reserves, areas which already have seen declines in fish population will be exposed to more hunting and commercial fishing. Tourists looking out over Monterey Bay from the aquarium and the nearby restaurants will see commercial fishing boats along MacAbee Beach dragging dead animals aboard, instead of seeing a world famous view. Scenic 17 Mile drive and the 18th hole at Pebble Beach will have a view to the brutality of habitat destruction.

The above can only reduce the number of scuba divers and tourists that visit Monterey and Carmel and thus negatively impact businesses that depend on those dollars. Divers and Non-Diving visitors bring their families with them and spend money in hotels, restaurants and souvenir shops throughout Monterey County. Many nationally-recognized dive clubs, including those dedicated to conservation, organize large outings that charter local boats and also include post-dive visits to restaurants and the aquarium. I myself, as a frequent visitor, will often stay at a Monterey hotel to get in an early morning charter boat dive the next day.

In closing, Monterey County depends on tourism, plain and simple. If we as a community are to preserve the very marine environment that has made this a famous tourist destination we must set aside the coastal areas for marine reserves. Thank you for your time and consideration

Sincerely
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